

The Challenge

Sierra Army Depot, Herling, CA

December 2003/January 2004

Vol. 60 No. 11



Merry Christmas

Commander's View

Thanks to all who attended our 2nd Christmas Ball at the Peppermill. This year's turnout (127) bettered the (79) number from last year. I think the congaline is now a tradition.

I want also ask each employee of Sierra Army Depot to take a moment to reflect on all of the blessings we enjoy and the sacrifices being made by our servicemen and women. This would include Colonel Plemmons, our Depot Commander along with the Leonard Dowdy, Leif Anderson, Steve Watkins, Ken Fanning, Robert Ray, Jason Tong, Mike Johnson, Larry Cowan and Stu Kenworthy who are currently over in Iraq. Please remember each one of these individuals in your Christmas prayers.

SAFETY

Don't let the holiday be ruined by an accident. Think safety in everything you do. Many of you may be traveling during the holidays. Please consider the added danger of changing weather and heavier than-normal holiday traffic. It's always a good idea to watch out for the other driver.



Vincent Sabatino
MISSION WORKLOAD

The workload posture for the installation is more than healthy. We carried over about 500K Direct Labor Hours and projected to accomplish approximately one million hours this year. Of course, funding and availability of assets always alter the original plan. We are still looking at accomplishing 800K direct labor hours this year.

This information required us to re-evaluate our hiring plan. We are hiring 140 temporary positions and 52 Contractor positions beginning not later than the new calendar year. We are also reevaluating the skills requirements

to ensure that we have what we need to complete the workload. In the interim, I want to assure each Temporary employee that we will be providing you the opportunity to be placed in a new Temporary Appointment. Please remember to apply for those positions. If you don't apply, you cannot be automatically selected.

The bottom line to this discussion is that there is plenty of work to be accomplished. Workload adjustments only require us to adjust our additional hiring of Temporary employees. **We will not run out of work.** I urge you to work hard at completing these direct labor hours. The next twelve months are critical to Sierra Army Depot and the Sierra Team.



My Thanks to Everyone

They say that everyone needs to be ready for change. I can definitely attest to that statement. My detail into the Public Affairs Office is coming to a close and I will be going back to the BRAC Office to work with Bill Bahl on BRAC 2005. During my 20 years on depot, I am beginning to think that change has become my middle name. I can also say that every change has been a very good experience.

At this time I would like to thank everyone that provided input to the monthly edition of the Challenge. I guess you could say the name of the paper, The Challenge, is very appropriate when it comes to putting everything together. However, not only was it a pleasure, but I had fun in the process. Making the decisions as to what pictures, stories, captions, and headlines was not an easy task to accomplish.

After we come back from the holidays, the depot will have a new editor for the Challenge. I hope that she will receive the continued support that you have given myself during these past couple of months.

I would like to extend a very special thanks to Lynn Goddard, Depot Photographer. Without her tireless effort to capture special moments around the depot, I would not have the pictures that show all the hard work and dedication by the depot employees. Lynn created the front and back covers of this edition of the Challenge. Thank you Lynn for all your hard work!

Again, it has been a pleasure providing you with a paper that captured what Sierra is all about.

Lori McDonald



The Union's Position: AFGE, Local 1808

In November, elections were held for Union Officers. The newly elected Union Officials are as follows, Jim Swistowicz, President; Cecil Fain, Executive Vice President; Paul St. Germain, Vice President; Sue Leslie, Secretary/Treasurer;

Brenda Fletcher, Board Member; Manual Leslie, Board Member; and Duane Schlusler, Sergeant at Arms. These newly elected Officials make up my executive Board and they will take office effective January 1, 2004.

Management and the Union has come to an agreement regarding the work schedule, and that is to stay on 4/10's in all areas on the Depot, based on our current projected workload. If there is any change in the workload for FY04 then we will have to re-look on how to accomplish the ever-changing mission requirements.

As you all know we have eight fellow Depot employees stationed in Iraq.



Jim Swistowicz

As a Vietnam Veteran, I know how important it was for our morale when we received cards or letters from friends and relatives stateside especially during the Holidays. Here are their names and the address where you can

send them a thank you for their service on the War in Iraq. Jason A. Tong, Lief E. Anderson, Larry L. Cowan, Leonard G. Dowdy, Robert S. Ray, Michael A. Johnson, Kenneth D. Fanning, Steven R. Watkins. The address where you can mail them is: AMC-LSE ANACONDA, APO-AE 09372-1684.

If you would like to send Col Plemmons a Christmas card **ONLY**, the address is: Col Paul Plemmons, CJTF-7C7, Engineers, Camp Victory, Iraq 09342-1400.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Enjoy the holiday season. Be safe. I look forward to seeing you after the new year.

Union meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month, at bldg. 58, meeting starts at 5:15 p.m.. Union Office phone is x5375.

The Challenge

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What is your New Year's Resolution?



Bill Bahl
Chief, QEO

"To learn to use Adobe In Design."



Garry Garrett
Power Support Systems Mechanic

"To get Sierra ISO certified to become more efficient and cost effective for our customer."



Casey Humphrey
General Support Helper

"Quit chewing tobacco."



Jeanine Brown
General Support Helper

"To have more patience."

Army Names 13th Sergeant Major of the Army

Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee and Chief of Staff of the Army General Peter J. Schoomaker announced Nov. 18 that Command Sergeant Major Kenneth O. Preston has been selected as the 13th Sergeant Major of the Army.

Preston will succeed SMA Jack L. Tilley when he retires Jan. 15, 2004.

The SMA designee has been serving as the command sergeant major for V Corps in Heidelberg, Germany, since April 2001. He is also serving as the command sergeant major for Combined Joint Task Force 7 serving in Baghdad, Iraq.

Preston will be sworn in as the newest Army senior enlisted advisor during ceremonies at the Pentagon on Jan. 15, 2004.

As Sergeant Major of the Army, Preston will serve as the Army Chief of Staff's personal advisor on all enlisted-related matters, particularly in



SMA Kenneth O. Preston

areas affecting soldier training, noncommissioned officer leader development and well being for families. The SMA travels extensively throughout the world observing Army training and operations. The SMA listens to concerns and provides feedback and recommendations to Army and Department of Defense

leadership regarding improvements in quality of life. In addition, he sits on a wide variety of councils and boards that make decisions affecting enlisted soldiers and their families.

The SMA routinely is invited to testify before Congress.

Preston is a native of Mount Savage, Md., and was born Feb. 18, 1957. Preston entered the Army on June 30, 1975, and has served in every enlisted leadership position from tank commander to command sergeant major.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, one Bronze Star, four Meritorious Service Medals, six Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, Southwest Asia Service Ribbon, Liberation of Kuwait Ribbon (Saudi Arabia), Kosovo Medal, the NATO Medal and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award.

Preston and his wife have three children.



Cecil Fain, Transportation Branch, was recognized for his dedication of 40 years of federal service.

Photos By Lynn Goddard



Vince Sabatino, Acting Depot Commander, left presented Charlotte Randolph with the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service and a Commander's coin at a farewell luncheon. Ms. Randolph has accepted a position with the Bureau of Land Management at Yosemite National Park. Good luck Charlotte!



Photo by Chris Marquard

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Santa and his elf. Both were in attendance during the annual lighting of the Christmas tree located outside the Youth Services building. Santa talks with one little boy about how good he has been throughout the year and what he would like for Christmas. This little boy was one of many good little children that sat on Santa's lap and received gifts. Refreshments were provided by Tammy Gage, CYS Coordinator and staff.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the *Mission Update*. It was a little over a year ago when Mr. James Manfred called a meeting and requested "volunteers" to attend. I myself happen to be in my supervisor's office when he suggested that I go across the hall and see what was going on, if someone from Shops Division was required I was to "volunteer". Well that was a year ago...we went from the original 5 staff members down to 3 in about 2 months. This made more work for the rest of us but we endured. I would like to thank Meg Hill and Barb McGee for their help in the past year, without it I would not have been able to put the newsletter together.

*Emley Ruth Dowden
Copy Editor/Writer
Mission Update*



"Leadership is solving problems. The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them or conclude you do not ~~care~~. ~~Either case is a failure of leadership.~~"

Collin L. Powell

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE UPDATE:

We are initiating new work from Shepard Air Force Base to include non-medical equipment such as air conditioning units. Ms. Cindy Garza is pursuing future workload endeavors with them.

Stryker Brigade Combat Team Configured Loads efforts are increasing to include additional non Stryker Unit support. Recent efforts have included NTC/JRTC support. The effort includes development of new modules and packaging plans. Mr. Bill Coffenberry and Ms. Meg Hill recently attended working groups to further reach Objective Force goals of configured loads Army wide.

Mr. Larry Draper and Ms. Meg Hill recently attended the DOD Maintenance symposium in King of Prussia Pennsylvania. Several industry and government opportunities are being pursued and implemented. Including devices that will allow higher production and better products in cleaning and servicing of equipment.

We are initiating efforts to support GSIE/TACOM with production of "Humvee" HMMWV Door armor plating kits. Mr. Dave Foxworthy is spearheading the operation, thank you Dave.

We are involved in the development of the AMC Logistics Support Element "Maintenance Fly Away Package". Mr. Dee Kimble and Mr. Vince Sabatino recently attended demonstrations and the In process review @ TACOM- Rock Island. Prototype efforts are in process at this time.

Sierra received our first active unit hospital, the 31st Combat Support Hospital (CSH) from Ft. Bliss TX this month. This is Sierra's first hospital that is managed by the Forces Command (FORSCOM). Sierra finalized the Statement of Work (SOW) with FORSCOM after a 2-year endeavor to bring this work into the Depot.

Earlier in the month Richard Schmidt and Lee Schroder went to Ft. Bliss to help inventory and pack the 164 bed slice of the hospital and get it ready to ship to Sierra. (Good job guys)

One Army Medical Department (AMEDD) hospital down, eight to go.

DIRECTORATE PROMOTIONS

Non-Competitive Promotions:

Cindy Garza was promoted to a Lead General Supply Specialist, GS-2001-12

Michelle Russell was promoted to a General Supply Specialist, GS-2001-11

Joann Davis was promoted to a Secretary, GS-0318-07

Competitive Promotions:

Joe Henderson was promoted to a Supervisory Supply Management Specialist, GS-2003-12

Don Cook was promoted to a Warehousing/Stock Handling Supervisor, WS-6901-07

ANTICIPATED VACANIES

Tool and Parts Attendant, WG-6904-4/5

Supply Technician, GS-2005-07

Freight Rate Specialist, GS-2131-6/7

Painting Worker, WG-4102-7/9

Industrial Arts Specialist, GS-1101-7/8

Woodworker, WG-4604-7/8

Material Handler (MVO), WG-6907-6/7

Packer, WG-7002-4/5

Production Controller, GS-1152-09

Production Controller, GS-1152-11

Production Controller, GS-1152-12

Electrician, WG-2805-10

General Supply Specialist, GS-2001-11

Instrument Mechanic, WG-3359-11

Mechanical Equipment Repairer, WG-5801-08

Materials Handler, WG-6907-06

Materials Handler, WG-6907-05

Packer, WG-7002-06

Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703-07

Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703-06

Office Automation Assistant, GS-0326-05 (Temp Appointment)

2003 YEAR IN REVIEW



Photo by Ruth Dowden

Gerald Eckhardt (General Support Helper) gets his horse ready for a 50 mile Endurance Ride in Nevada. What is an Endurance Ride? **See the next Mission Update!**



Photo Submitted

Hugh Blosser "hog ties" a steer at the Lassen County Fair.



Photo by Ruth Dowden

Ginger Bill (former Support Division Chief) gets ready to ride a 50 mile Endurance ride.



Photo Submitted

Edith Higgins (daughter of Gary Higgins) and Cori O'Brien (daughter of Mike O'Brien) get ready for their event at the Ranch Rodeo.



Photo by Ruth Dowden

Eggheads hit Sierra. Directorate employees utilized these little GEM (Global Electric Motor) cars to reduce petroleum consumption.



Photo by Ruth Dowden

The Three Little Pigs were safe in their homes when a great wind storm came and blew down this tent. It was one of those cases of "now you see it - now you don't".



Photo By John Bower

Danise Wilcox, left, receives a retirement flag after 22 years of federal service from Vince Sabatino, Acting Commander. Ms. Wilcox was the Operations Officer within the Directorate of Intelligence and Security Operations.

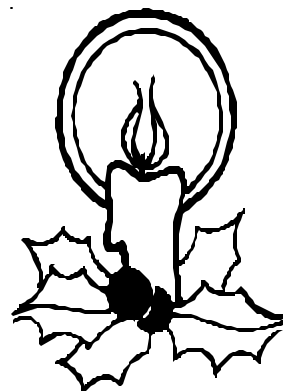


Corporal Jason Kimball, left, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, presents an Iraqi battle flag from his unit to Vince Sabatino. Kimball's unit was grateful for all the equipment and supplies provided by the soldiers stationed in Iraq. Corporal Kimball is the Chief of the Evaluation, Contracting Office.



Photo By Lynn Goddard

Vince Sabatino, second from left, presented Commander's coins to three individuals who contributed to the successful transfer of property with the depot during the BRAC 95 process. Pictured from left to right are Regina Rankin (Lassen County Local Reuse Authority), Vince Sabatino, Adrian Nakayama (HQDA BRAC Office), and Jerry Bensen (Corps of Engineers).



Students' effort, at Gregory Haynes, right, Rol skating ;



Photo By Chris Marquard

rne Division (Air Assault) presents a captured Depot Commander earlier this month. Corporal applies the Sierra Army Depot provided to the son of Jay Brandenberger, Quality Assurance



Photo By Lynn Goddard

Joe Turner from the QEO Office has accepted a job in Japan. His new job will be the Technical Advisor for Army Prepositioned Stocks. His last day is Jan. 7, 2004.



Photo By Lynn Goddard

he Fort Sage Primary School received praise for their outstanding achievement in perfect attendance, no tardiness, work
work completion. Pictured back row left to right Linsay Stevens, Kandance Smiles, Michael Richards, Angelique Owen,
, Ebone' Wheeler, Taylor Retterath, and Desiree Readenour. Second row left to right David Silva, Cody Jacobs, Kathryn
i Leonard, Audrnae McGinnis, Destiny Haynes, Matthew Johnson, Jessica Johnson, and Rosemary Giese. Front row left to
wen, Derek Haynes, Cheryl Weber, Danielle Harris, and Mason Holmes. All will participate in a field trip for a fun day of
ng to Chuck E Cheese.

CYS News

CYS is planning a variety of activities centered around the Thanks Giving holiday. The MS/Teens are doing a Holiday cooking experience and plan some activities in support of Veterans day.

A fundraiser has been started to buy recreation items for the soldiers in Iraq. Money is collected at the CYS building #145 to purchase board games, volleyball net, volleyballs, etc. These are some of the items requested directly from our troops. Everybody is invited to stop by and make a donation. It was also brought to our attention that a lot of our soldiers are not receiving

any mail from home, so the CYS kids will start writing letters to the soldiers. If the raised funds allow, CYS will be sending cookies and personal items to the troops. On the home front, CYS is hosting a soccer banquet on 13 Nov. to present trophy's to all the players. CYS had 4 teams participate in the Susanville soccer league.

SAS will have their own thanks giving party, make colorful leaves, have a drawing contest and have a jump rope challenge. Ideas were submitted by Audrnae McGinnis, Jake Croghan, Danielle Harris, Justin White and Jazmine Quezada

PRIMARY STUDENTS EXCEL IN SCHOOL



Photo By Lynn Goddard

Students at Fort Sage School were recognized as "Student of the Trimester" for their outstanding accomplishments during the grading period. Pictured from left to right are Linsay Stevens, Destiny Haynes, Rosemary Giese, Mason Holmes, Kristie Shirley, and David Adams.

CALIFORNIA CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Sierra Army Depot, School-Age Services Program, announces the sponsorship of the Child Care Food Program. The program is available without charge to all eligible participants. All children are served the same meals at no separate charge.

"The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all it's programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, special need, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital, or family status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative mean for communication or program

information (Braille, large print, audio tape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (Voice and TDD)."

"To file a discrimination complaint, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (Voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

If you would like more more information please contact Dorothy Lange (530)827-4562 or Renate Jones (530)827-4696.

CYS Liaison News

Educational Programs for Teens

CYS School Liaison News: Educational Programs for Teens

CYS is offering Career Launch, SAT/ACT practice tests, and a "Teen Talk" mentorship club for teens at Herlong High School. The Career Lunch program started on November 5th and will continue throughout the end of January. This program teaches students how to prepare resumes, interviewing skills, and how to properly dress for an interview. The website also provides information on SAT/ACT testing schedules, colleges and universities, financial aid, and career interest surveys. The students were assigned their own username and password, which allows them accessibility to their account during school and out of school. So far, the students have enjoyed working in the program and they are excited about producing a professional resume and acquiring other professional skills that will prepare them for the workforce.

The SAT/ACT practice testing will be offered starting 15 December. These tests will be completed on the computer at CYS during school time. The tests will give students an advantage of practicing and performing well on the actual test. These tests are not mandatory, so students have to sign up for this program. The "Teen Talk" mentorship club is designed to give teens an outlet to discuss topics like stress, academic challenges, peer pressure, and other social issues that greatly impact their daily lives. This club will meet at least twice each month at the school and at CYS during the lunch period. All of these programs are beneficial to the youth in their preparation for life. Again, none of these programs are mandatory, so if parents/guardians want their child to participate, please encourage them to sign up now for these opportunities. If students or parents have any questions about any program, please contact Dorothy Lange at 4562 or 4696.

MWR Services

Skedaddle Inn Conference Center

Lounge is open Thursday, 5 p.m. to ? p.m.

The Skedaddle Inn Conference Center is equipped to cater large or small events. Call the manager at 4360 [email: ok.fern@sierra.army.mil](mailto:ok.fern@sierra.army.mil)
Hours: Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed December 25, 2003 to January 4, 2004.

Sierra Lodge/Guest House

Call the lodging manager, 4544, or email: ok.fern@sierra.army.mil for information.

Sierra Bowling Center and Snack Bar

NEW HOURS Open everyday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Call 4442. Closed Christmas Day and news Years Day. Open New Years Eve until 1:30 a.m.

Physical Fitness Center

Open Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday, Sunday open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information call 4655 or send an email to raul.granados@sierra.army.mil. Closed December 25 - 28, 2003 and January 1 - 4, 2004.

Outdoor Recreation and Equipment Rental

For reservations and information call Joe Rosnack, 4354. Closed December 25 - 28, 2003 and January 1 - 4, 2004.

Laundromat

Open daily, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. in building 142. Cost for wash, \$1.25 and .25 cents for 15 minute drying. For your convenience, there is a machine with laundry supplies located inside the facility and also a change machine.

Recycling Center

Closed December 25 - 28, 2003 and January 1 - 4, 2004.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

Administrative Office, 4563, Administrative Assistant, 4497, Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. tamara.gage@sierra.army.mil or regina.stauffer@sierra.army.mil Business Office: 4178, 4155, 4154.



CYS MONTHLY THEME: CELEBRATIONS

The CYS theme for the month of December is "Celebrations". This year's Annual Family Christmas Program will be on December 13, 2003, 1:00pm at the Youth Center. This year's celebration will be slightly different. Parents will have the opportunity to win prizes for the whole family from theater and ballet tickets to bowling passes. Parents MUST be present in order to win. In addition,

there will be pictures with Santa and children gifts, along with teen programming ideas included roller-skating, 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, Christmas parties and dances.

Other special events will include Christmas Caroling, gift creations, cooking exploration and much more. Check out the CYS monthly calendar for exact dates and times. The local Boys and Girls Club of America Fine

Arts Exhibit will be held during the week of December 15th at the local Credit Union. Please stop by and view local youths' works of art.

Upcoming events to watch for include new 4-H programs, Boys and Girls Club of America programs such as Career Launch, Teen Mentoring, Fine Arts Exhibit and Photography.

For more information on Child and Youth Services, contact 827-4696.

CLICK IT OR TICKET

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Dec. 1, 2003) — Drivers and passengers who get caught on Army posts not wearing a seatbelt during the holiday season can expect harsher penalties, according to officials at the U.S. Army Safety Center.

The Army is aggressively enforcing seatbelt use by joining the nationwide "Click It or Ticket" campaign. Military police will issue tickets to drivers and passengers who are not buckled up. Along with the ticket, offenders at some installations can expect other penalties, such as suspension of their on-post driving privileges.

"The Army can and must take positive action to save the lives of our Soldiers and civilian employees," stated a message released to all Army activities Nov. 26 by Director of the Army Staff Lt. Gen. James Lovelace. "We must increase seat belt use both on and off the installation."

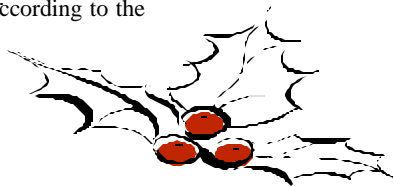
Over the past three years the Army has lost 318 Soldiers in privately owned vehicle accidents, and a significant number of those Soldiers were not wearing seatbelts, according to the message.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld formed the Defense Safety Oversight Council earlier this year, and has challenged all Defense agencies to reduce the number of accidents and injuries recorded in 2002 by 20 percent in fiscal year 2004 and 50 percent in 2005.

One way the Army is hoping to decrease its accident numbers is by displaying zero tolerance when people disregard seatbelt laws during holiday weekends. The "Click It or Ticket" campaign will run from Dec. 21 through Jan. 3 and over all of the 2004 national holiday weekends.

U.S. Army Europe has already initiated the program, and it revokes the driver licenses of first-time offenders for seven days. Lovelace's message directed other major commands to also take a hard stance.

"USAREUR ... successfully increased seatbelt usage. The USAREUR campaign should be used as a model to implement campaigns Armywide," stated the message.



SAFETY WORD JUMBLE

Test your knowledge of workplace safety by unscrambling the following jumbled words to reveal 10 common workplace safety terms. Check your answers at the bottom.

1. nenodefi esacsp
-
2. hmciane dgaringu
-
3. oeupekhgsein
-
4. esnpola tectirovpe ipntequme
-
5. fatsey essslag
-
6. piesrrarvto econtiotpr
-
7. riheagn esovenoratni
-
8. tirfs ida
-
9. oicermonsg
-
10. flobonorbr hogpasten
-

Answers to safety word jumble on page 11

Sending a Son to War: A Mother's Story

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20, 2003 — It wasn't easy sending her only son off to war last February, Nancy Fowler admits. And it's no easier now that he's home, knowing that his unit, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, is preparing to return to Iraq again — this time, for a full year.

But Fowler, an administrative assistant for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration here has learned to rebound gracefully from life's curve balls.

A two-time cancer survivor, she's come to terms with the fine line between sickness and health — and life and death.

And she said the same old-fashioned values that gave her strength through her personal ordeal sustained her during Marine Lance Cpl. Gregory's Smith's nine-month deployment to Kuwait and Iraq: faith in God, country and family.

Fowler said she drew on that faith constantly through the first days, then weeks of the war, when she waited six weeks before receiving her first letter from Greg, written five weeks earlier. "It was so hard watching the nightly news and wondering where that angel was and if he was okay," she said.

But as she waited, Fowler exuded an unfaltering confidence in her son, his unit and the U.S. military as a whole. She told her friends and coworkers how proud she was of her son and how committed he was to the mission at hand.

What she didn't so readily share were those isolated moments when she'd slip away from her desk at work to release tears harbored inside from within the private confines of a bathroom stall. "You look to others to help you, and they're very supportive," she said. "But I also learned that sometimes you have to ask for their help when you need it."

When the first letter from her son finally arrived, Fowler said she felt "a tremendous sense of relief," then a deep-seeded pride. "Greg showed that he had his head straight on his shoulders, that he was thinking positively and that he was dwelling on the task at hand," she said.

Greg wrote in later letters to his mother how touched he felt when infantry soldiers told him that the work he and his fellow Marines were doing — maintaining Pioneer unmanned aerial vehicles that provided the "eyes in the sky" to root out enemy threats — was "helping to save so many lives."

"This is exactly where I need to be at this moment at time," Greg told his mother during their first phone conversation, five months after he deployed from Twentynine Palms, Calif. "I'm trained, focused and honored to be a part of this effort!"

Throughout his deployment, Greg's letters revealed that he was "always very proud of what he was working toward and of being part of a team," Fowler said.

Greg's unit returned home in late September, then learned less than two months later that his unit is slated to return to Iraq in late January or early February. But Fowler said she hears no grumbling. "He tell us that he's been there and he's ready," she said. "He remains positive, focused and honored to continue to play a role in Iraq's fight for freedom."

Fowler admits that she's the one struggling with conflicting emotions about her son's upcoming deployment. But she said she draws tremendous strength from a realization that came to her during Greg's first deployment to Iraq.

She said and her husband Ed had been trying to send daily letters "to be cheerleaders and encourage Greg with our words of wisdom," she said. But one night, the words simply wouldn't come.

"Thumbly realized that I was not the wise one," Fowler said. "My usual words, to focus on the task at hand, say his prayers and remember that he was a child of God seemed so empty."

Fowler said she realized that her son had faced experiences through the military and Iraq that she could barely imagine and that along the way, he "had become a man."

"My letter that evening was simple," she said. "I told Greg that I loved him and was honored to be his mother."



THE PASSENGER

By Staff Sgt. Jeramie Brown
Detachment 4, Air Force News
11/14/2003 - RAMSTEIN AIR
BASE, Germany (AFPN) — Like

most Americans, I find that I am pretty selfish sometimes. I learned just how selfish on a recent trip to Iraq. I was sitting on a C-130 Hercules waiting to leave a location I can't spell or pronounce, when we got delayed. I was annoyed. I'd been traveling for hours trying to get to my destination and here we were, stuck in some out-of-the-way place and I was hot, tired and ready to get there already. Then it happened. I found out we were waiting on another passenger.

I didn't know his name. I say 'his' but I didn't know if he was actually a he or a she. I didn't know what branch of service he was in or what rank he was. All I knew was that this passenger cost me another hour and a half on that plane.

Little did I know how profound an impact "The Passenger" would have on me. You see, this passenger that we had to wait on, who delayed our trip and annoyed me and the other passengers, was a casualty of war.

The ground crew brought him on board in a body bag. They laid him down between the jump seats and the cargo pallet, and covered him with Old Glory. At that moment, I felt the heat of shame in my face. Who was I to worry about a little lost sleep or a few extra hours on a plane when he had given his life in this war?

By this time, everyone on board had stood up out of respect and, when they had "The Passenger" secure, the sergeant leading the crew called the plane to attention and barked a quick command. Every man and woman on that plane, from private to colonel immediately snapped a crisp salute in honor of the ultimate sacrifice made by "The Passenger". It was a moment of perfect unity. Every eye on that flag, every arm raised in respect, every breath caught in every throat for just one second.

With our respects paid, everyone took his or her seat and prepared for take-off. I don't know about anyone else on that plane but I found myself contemplating what this passenger's sacrifice meant: to me, to our country, but mostly to his family. I found myself wondering what he gave up for the war on terror. Did he leave a wife behind when he deployed? Did he have children out there somewhere who would never see their father again? What about his parents, brothers and sisters? How would his family cope with his death?

Was the sacrifice he made for his country worth it? To his family, perhaps not. To the Iraqi families, maybe.

You see, I learned something else on this trip. I learned how the Iraqi people are living. Ramshackle houses... no cars... no central air, or any air conditioning for that matter, none of the so called 'modern conveniences'. I also learned that, thanks to our efforts, some

of the kids are now able to go to school for the first time in years. Teachers are allowed to teach in multiple languages and cover subjects that were banned during the old regime.

Clinics are opening all over the country, doctors are no longer afraid that if they misdiagnose someone it will cost them their lives. That's right, there is no malpractice insurance in Iraq. A doctor at one of the clinics told me that, under the old regime, if a doctor made a mistake, he paid for it with his life. So was "The Passenger's" sacrifice worth it? I guess it depends on your point of view.

Then I started thinking about my own family. How would my wife deal with my death if it came on this trip? Would my children be ok? How horrible would it be for my parents to outlive me? I thought of my brother and his family in California. How many times have I meant to call them only to get distracted and forget? I haven't seen them in almost four years. My sister in Illinois hasn't seen me in a couple of years either. When was the last time I called her? Why haven't I e-mailed her or my niece lately? I use to send her e-mails every week or so, but I seem to have let my oh-so-busy life get in the way of communicating with the ones I love. Do I write enough? Call enough? Definitely not. I think that's what it all comes down to.

We get so wrapped up in our lives that we forget about the other people in this world. We forget that not every-

one lives in a free society. We forget that sometimes you have to stand up for people who can't stand up for themselves. We forget that we have a responsibility to the people of this world, and not because we are a super power or have the best military in the world, but simply because we all share this planet. We forget that, for good or bad, what one person does affects everyone.

What we can't forget is that we never know when the moment of our death will come. Don't forget to tell the people who are most important to you how much you love them and how much you miss them. Don't forget to take time out of your 'busy' schedule and call your family and friends. Don't forget to do something today that will make a difference tomorrow, so that when your time comes someone can say 'Thank you for the sacrifices you made, you had a profound impact on my life.'

So to "The Passenger," I say thank you. Thank you for serving your country. Thank you for standing up for people who can't stand up for themselves. Thank you for making the ultimate sacrifice. Most importantly, thank you for making me realize that our time on this earth is never certain and we'd better do our best to make it worthwhile. May you find peace and happiness wherever you may be.

Now, if you will excuse me, I have to go call my kids, my parents, my brother, my sister...



Army Sets Up Liaison Office To Assist in Homeland Security

By Sandra I. Erwin
National Defense Magazine

The Army is setting up a "homeland security cell" to act as a liaison organization with the Department of Homeland Security. The plan is to give DHS easier access to Army programs and suppliers.

In charge of this effort is the Army program executive office for combat support and combat service support, based in Warren, Mich.

PEO CS&CSS would be the "single point of focus for acquisition for the Army" in support of homeland se-

curity, said Army Col. Philip R. Loschiavo, who currently runs that office.

Programs will be broken into three areas: transportation, infrastructure and physical security. Transportation equipment includes trucks, trailers, watercraft, cranes and rail stock. Infrastructure involves construction equipment, water and petroleum systems, auxiliary power generation and bunkers. Security systems would encompass perimeter and facility

intrusion detection and denial equipment, customized Humvees and armored security vehicles.

To help state and local agencies acquire equipment, for example, the PEO would set up a preferred vendor product list, add options to existing Army contracts to fill other agencies' requirements and even provide Army hardware to homeland security organizations.

The Army's depots and arsenals could be used for storage and repairs.



AVIATION MECHANICS RECEIVE SUGGESTION AWARD

By Clifford Louie

VE Program Manager

Mark Vandeburgh and Nelson Deglandon of the Aviation Shop came up with a win-win situation for both themselves and Sierra Army Depot. They came up with an idea on how to improve the way they repair the Engine Air Particle Separator (EAPS) for the CH-47 Chinook helicopter. That idea was further developed and refined through the Value Engineering methodology and later submitted as a beneficial suggestion. In the end, they helped the Depot achieve its FY03 Value Engineering savings goal as well as receive a sizable monetary award.

The situation was this: mounting feet are fastened to the EAPS with the use of safety screws and nut-plates. Sometimes the nut-plates get sheared off, compromising the integrity of the fastening.

The old ways for dealing with sheared off nut-plates were to either

replace them with new nut-plates or to scrap the EAPS. However, the former meant the EAPS had to be taken apart and this took too many man-hours. The latter meant that the old EAPS would be replaced with a new EAPS which costs \$139,962.

Mark and Nelson came up with the idea of replacing the nut-plates with another type of fastener. After considering several alternatives, they came up with using riv-nuts - a stronger, more durable, and easier-to-install fastener. Their idea saved four EAPS from being scrapped.

Congratulations to Mark and Nelson for thinking smartly!

If you have any ideas that can help improve Depot operations, call either Clifford Louie @ X4330 or Dan Hankins @ X5223. We can help you develop your ideas into viable suggestions.



Photo By Clifford Louie

Pictured at left, Nelson Deglandon and Mark Vandeburgh came up with the suggestion for improving the way of repairing the Engine Air Particle Separator (EAPS) for the CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

101st Combat Operations Group Training at Sierra Army Depot

By Robert Harnden

Security Training Operations

During 1 - 9 November 2003, members from the 101st Air Force Combat Operations Group trained at Amedee Army Air Field.

The purpose of this training was to provide real world, hands-on training for Air Force Air Traffic controllers in a simulated remote combat environment. The focus of this training was to provide "lights out" aircraft landing operations for the 123rd Air Rescue Squadron (ARS) from Moffet Field, CA. Pilots flying C-130 aircraft navigated in total darkness using night vision goggles, while ground support was provided by various support squadrons using satellite communications and a mobile/tactical air traffic control tower. During the week long exercise, members of the 244th Combat Communications Squadron (CBCS) provided voice and data services to members of the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron (ATCS), who then provided radio communications with the pilots for "touch and go" landings in total darkness.

Using the equipment deployed at Amedee, the airmen relayed signals from the satellite dish to a communications equipment tent in which members

of the 173rd Fighter Wing decoded the satellite signals into voice, radio, telephone, and computer data. This equipment sorts out a multiplex of communications down linked from the SATCOM providing the ground support airmen with worldwide communications for LAN access, telephone lines, internet connection, and secure cryptographic phone lines.

Members of the 123rd Weather Flight Squadron support the air traffic control operation by providing real-time weather forecasting to the tower, which in turn relays current weather conditions to the pilots. Using a laser beam solometer, the weather flight members can determine cloud height levels and density, and by using an anemometer provide wind speed and direction, lightning detection, rain gauge and pressure levels, crosswind ratios, and other local atmospheric weather conditions to the pilots.

Members of the 101st Combat Operations Group emphatically stated that Sierra Army depot provides them optimal training conditions for a combat desert training environment similar to those found in Afghanistan and other forward deployable locations.



Pictured left, the 244th Combat Communications Squadron set up a 20 foot TSE-93B Satellite Dish at Amedee Airfield for world wide communications via satellite for their hands on training. Below, the MSN7 Mobile Air Traffic Control Tower utilizes data from the SATCOM system for land line telephone access to worldwide air traffic control entities. It has seven different radios on board in which to communicate directly with the aircraft and two LMR radios for communications with ground traffic such as fire control and emergency ambulance elements. This is the same system as deployed in Afghanistan.

Photos by Lynn Goddard



Answers to word jumble

1) confined spaces; 2) machine guarding; 3) housekeeping; 4) personal protective equipment; 5) safety glasses; 6) respiratory protection; 7) hearing conservation; 8) first aid; 9) ergonomics; 10) bloodborne pathogens



